Factor That Retailers Are Encouraged By Increased Activity

Losses of First Half of Year Offset by Gains in Recent Months; Merchants' Outlook Is More Hopeful

By Harry F. Baker

7 ITH a steadily increasing trade in the latter part of 1922, cul- will minating in a pre-holiday volume of business that in most cases year. broke all previous records, retailers, especially the executives of era the larger department stores, are looking forward to 1923 with much more optimism than was apparent at the beginning of 1922.

Losses in the first haif of the year generally were offset by gains in the last giv months, and most of the large stores report gains in the there volume of sales, compared with 1921. The growth of retail trade for the last year closely parallels the gain in general business, adding further strength to the use of comparative sales volume at retail and a general observers

strength to the use of comparative sales volume at retail and a general business barometer.

Retail trade in general entered 1922 with many misgivings. There was much unemployment, which reduced surrhasing power in the industrial sections, coupled with low prices for farm products which prevented dagainst any increase in demand for goods for the first six months of the year. During that period, according to leading retail the first six months of the year. During that period, according to leading retail was to obtain goods for the first six months of the year. During that period, according to leading retail the first six months of the year. During that time that much "cheap" or interior outlity merchandise was products where was no return to profligate or extravagant spending, there was no return

end advances for merchangise.

ent, with the usual 'white sales' solution to this problem has been ent, with the usual 'white sales' solution to this problem has been ent, with the usual 'white sales' solution to this problem has been ent, with the usual 'white sales' solution to this problem has been ent, with the content of the cont erchants are educating our customnotably snoes, retailers have appointed to a lower level of prices for the style committees to confer with manu

Will Affect Cotton Trade

exports of cotton goods. Patches will perforce take the place of new gar-

Wage reductions in the American

The influence of the price factor in the recovery of sterling exchange is revealed in the late development of the above chart, reproduced by permission of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, and showing the movement since the beginning of the war of British and American scholesale prices and of sterling exchange. The price indices used. the 1913 average equaling 100 per cent, are those of the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics and "The Statist."

Two Outstanding Changes In 1922 Foreign Exchange

Recovery in Sterling Gives Evidence of England's Improved Outlook Just as Mark's Decline Shows Collapse in Germany

PARTNER in one of New York's leading banking houses, turning a neat phrase recently, declared that sterling had written off the rest of Europe. There have never been many doubts as to the financial soundness of England. Nevertheless, the definite assurance afforded by developments of the last year that whatever may happen to the most constructive, as the failure to check the collapse of Germany has been the most disappointing, feature of the 1922 record of international

England's strength and Germany's ling about 15 cents below its top and in weakness may be accounted the most the case of franca and lire was accounted to the case of franca and lire was accounted to the case of franca and lire was accounted to the case of franca and lire was accounted by speculation. Marks meaning the case of franca and lire was accounted by speculation.

Section of sterling's recovery.

Citation of the British payment of \$100,000,000 interest to the United States Treasury, of the continued influx of gold, of the expansion of German note circulation, of trade statistics and of political adjustments as in Italy and England, is pertinent to the rise and fall of the various currencies and to the concent was treated to the concent was treated. Even

The Price Factor in Sterling Exchange Movement Hansen Sees Fight Over Wage Level

(Continued from Page Str)

The Cost of Living

This brings us to a consideration of he cost of living and its relation to eages. The average weekly carnings of factory labor kept up with the cost of living until the latter part of 1919,

Outlook for Japan Shows Improvement

Rescue of Railroads From Attacks Urged

Carriers, Seeking to Regain Popular Favor, Subjected Anew to Political Pressure; Effect on Stocks

> By Theodore Prince Of L. M. Prince & Co.

ROM the old Greek mythology we learn how Prometheus, as the friend of mankind, stole fire from the kingdom of Jove, brigging it to man in a hollow reed. He thus brought upon himself the wrate of Jupiter, the ruler of gods and men. As a punishment, Jupiter deser himi to a rock on Mount Caucascus, where a vulture preyed upon his line For almost a generation the railroads have been chained to the "mounts of public resentment," and for just about as long politicians have beengaged in the delightful and joyous occupation of pluckling at the "live of the railroads. How far they have merited this antagonism for in vidual mismanagement is immaterial. Representing an important as oasic industry of our country, as well as a source of investment to miles of its people, the time has come when the railroads ought to be rela from their immolation and political attacks should cease

Just as the railroads began to feel & The farmers' bloc declared that their commodities must be sold for what they should bring in the world's markets and that the railroads must haul to the called farmers' "bloc" Transportation Act

Finances and Operation

The state of the s

Improvement Gompers Sees Will Be Less No Reductions Rapid in '23 In Wage Level